

Trefoil Guild Safeguarding policy

1. Purpose

The Trefoil Guild is an organisation which provides fun and friendship as well as providing support for our communities, Girlguiding and Scouting. Our members range in age from 18 years of age to over 100 years of age and we engage with each other through a variety of ways including face to face meetings, online chats and a wide range of activities and events.

Although an adult organisation many of our members encounter children through their involvement with Girlguiding and Scouting.

Trefoil will not tolerate abuse in any of its forms and is committed to safeguarding our members and those that take part in our activities especially those who are more vulnerable.

The purpose of this policy is to provide our staff and our members with the overarching principles to take reasonable steps to protect from harm anyone who comes into contact with the Trefoil Guild.

Its main aims are to provide

- An overview of adult safeguarding
- Clarity about our responsibilities to safeguard our members
- Details of the procedures to follow in the event of an issue arising

2. Scope

This policy is intended to support trustees, staff, and members within the Trefoil Guild to understand their roles and responsibilities in respect to safeguarding.

3. Safeguarding explained

The word safeguarding is used to describe those actions taken to protect the vulnerable from harm and all of us from exploitation.

'Everyone has the right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. Abuse and neglect can occur anywhere: in your own home or a public place, while you're in hospital or attending a day centre, or in a college or care home. You may be living alone or with others. The person causing the harm may be a stranger but, more often than not, you'll know and feel safe with them. They're usually in a position of trust and power, such as a health or care professional, relative or neighbour.'

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/help-from-social-services-and-charities/abuse-and-neglect-adults-at-risk/>

A vulnerable adult is anyone who may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from harm or exploitation. Safeguarding vulnerable adults involves reducing or preventing the risk of significant harm from neglect or abuse, while supporting them to maintain control of their own lives. Remember though that any adult can be vulnerable if they are unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from significant harm.

All guilds should have risk assessments in place for their meeting venue and for any events out side the meeting place, relating to the needs of their own members.

Safeguarding children is about protecting all those under 18 from harm such as abuse, maltreatment, exploitation, and neglect to ensure that they can grow up safely and have the best outcomes in life.

4. Recognising types of risk and harm

Safeguarding risks take many forms, including but not limited to:

- Physical
- Domestic violence, including “honour” based violence
- Neglect and self-neglect
- Sexual harassment, abuse, and exploitation
- Psychological or emotional
- Financial, material, or criminal exploitation
- Modern slavery
- Bullying and harassment (including cyberbullying)
- Abusing a position of trust in the charity
- Commercial exploitation
- The charities culture which may allow poor behaviour and poor accountability
- Hate and hate crime
- Vulnerability due to learning disabilities, drug or alcohol or frailty
- Abuse could occur at any time, and it may be difficult to recognise it. Some simple examples can be found in the appendix to this policy. The important thing is that if you have concerns then you should act particularly if:
 - You have seen something concerning
 - Someone says that they have been abused in some way
 - Another person talks to you and raises their concern
 - There has been an anonymous allegation

5. Reporting and managing safeguarding issues – adults

5.1 Immediate risk of harm or needing urgent medical attention

Talk to the person concerned and ask them what they would like to be done about it but don't conduct an "investigation". Seek consent from them to act and report the issue or call for assistance from the emergency services. If you believe that the person lacks capacity to make their own decisions or where other's safety and wellbeing is at risk and decide to act against their wishes you must record your decision and reasons for this.

Report the safeguarding concern within 24 hours to your country, region, or county chair.

5.2 Concerns requiring support or investigation

If it is not an emergency, then contact your county chair for support and advice as soon as practically possible. Be factual in your reporting and ensure that you include membership numbers and details of any actions already taken. If the county chair isn't available, then contact the Country/Region Chair or the National Office.

All members have a duty to report safeguarding concerns.

5.3 Reporting

The county, region and county chairs are required to notify the Trefoil office within 72 hours of receiving a safeguarding notification or concern. E-mail trefoilguild@girlguiding.org.uk or telephone 020 7834 6242 Ext: 3010 during office hours.

5.4 Investigation

An investigation or review of all safeguarding issues reported to the Trefoil office will be instigated by the national chair.

Trefoil will share information with other agencies when there is a significant risk of harm, a potential crime has been committed, or when deemed appropriate in the interests of adult or child protection and safeguarding. This will be undertaken lawfully and securely in line with the Data Protection Act 2018.

If a member, because of that investigation or review is found to be in breach of the Trefoil Code of Conduct, then the national chair in consultation with the country or region chair will take one of the following actions:

- Allow membership to continue but with limitations
- Remove membership either temporarily or permanently
- Take no further action

Appeals against the decision may only be considered if there is new information or evidence to be considered. Any appeal must be submitted in writing within 28 days of receiving the decision to the national president, The Trefoil Guild, 17-19 Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1W 0PT.

5.5 Whistleblowing

In rare situations that there are concerns about the lead members of the Trefoil Guild then the member with those concerns should report those concerns directly to the national chair or they can contact the Trefoil office and request another trustee as a contact.

6. Reporting and managing safeguarding issue – children

Under normal circumstances children do not attend Trefoil meetings or events as it is an adult only organisation. Trefoil do support Girlguiding and Scouting in many ways, such as being a volunteer in those organisations, an occasional helper or in supporting at an event. Sometimes those organisations attend the same event as Trefoil or come to Trefoil meetings.

Both the Scouts and Girlguiding have safeguarding policies which should be followed if any member is a volunteer in those organisations. The links to the policies below were correct at the time of writing this policy.

[scouts.org.uk/volunteers/staying-safe-and-safeguarding/reporting-a-concern-to-safeguarding/safeguarding-process/](https://www.scouts.org.uk/volunteers/staying-safe-and-safeguarding/reporting-a-concern-to-safeguarding/safeguarding-process/)

<https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-volunteers/policies/>

For members supporting an occasional event the onus is on the lead volunteer of that children's group to ensure that the necessary safeguarding support and safety processes are in place.

It is important to note though that all members have a duty to report safeguarding concerns without delay to the lead volunteer as soon as possible or to that children's organisation's relevant safeguarding team. For Girlguiding contact the Girlguiding HQ Safeguarding Team on 020 7834 6242 during office hours or 07508 032997 out of hours.

7. Prevention

All members have an obligation to avoid situations which could cause distress or enable safeguarding risks.

Members and staff should therefore:

- Read and understand this Safeguarding Policy
- Follow the Trefoil Guild Code of Conduct

- Always raise concerns as soon as they arise
- Use the complaints policy if appropriate
- Avoid situations when you are alone with a vulnerable adult or child
- Avoid situations when your actions could be misconstrued
- Make sure risk assessments are done for all meetings, activities and events paying particular attention if vulnerable adults or children are present
- If you are a volunteer for Girlguiding or Scouts, make sure that you have read and understood their policies and processes for management of safeguarding concerns
- The staff and trustees will have an annual forum to discuss Safeguarding within the Trefoil Guild to ensure that they are kept current with emerging issues and guidance

If there are any concerns about the lead members of Trefoil, then they should be reported – please see section 5.5 Whistleblowing.

7.1 Risk management

Staff employed in the Trefoil Guild go through an employment vetting procedure on appointment.

The staff, trustees, and members with designated roles in Trefoil are not required to have a DBS, or their equivalent in Scotland (Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) and Northern Ireland (Access Northern Ireland)).

The decision has been made in consideration that Trefoil as a charity does not provide care services to adults and does not include children in its membership. The decision does not mean that the Trefoil Guild is not vigilant in its duties around safeguarding and this decision will be reviewed annually or in the event of a change in statutory or operational need.

The Trefoil Guild is aware that there are potential safeguarding issues around financial and criminal exploitation but have a financial policy in place which includes processes to be followed at all levels in the management of funds, and a required independent annual examination of records which minimises the risk. The Trustees of the Trefoil Guild also complete annually a “Fit and Proper Person” declaration where the Trustees sign to say that they “ensure, or are likely to ensure, that charity funds and tax reliefs are used only for charitable purposes.”

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charities-fit-and-proper-persons-test>

It should be noted that members who have a volunteer role in Girlguiding undertake a DBS or equivalent check as part of that role, and Trefoil members

who provide occasional support to Girlguiding or Scouts are supervised by lead volunteers in those organisations.

8. Monitoring

This policy has been approved by the board of trustees and the implementation and monitoring of the policy will be undertaken by the finance and general purposes committee.

9. Further Information and additional resources

Safeguarding does not only apply to Trefoil so please remember that if you, a friend, or family member have concerns then you can raise a safeguarding concern for an unborn child, child, or adult by contacting your local authority. To report a crime or where there is immediate danger to an individual notify the police on 999 or 101 if there is no immediate danger.

More information can be found on The NHS Safeguarding App which has been developed as a resource for healthcare professionals, carers, and citizens. It provides up-to-date legislation, guidance, and information on how to report a safeguarding concern. It can be downloaded via Apple iOS or Google Play by searching 'NHS Safeguarding'.

Appendix: Examples of potential safeguarding concerns

This is not intended to be a full list of types of safeguarding concerns nor the signs that may be exhibited but may give some indication of potential issues that may arise.

Physical	
Types	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rough handling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making someone purposefully uncomfortable e.g., opening a window or making them sit outside when you know they are cold • Involuntary isolation • Forcible feeding or withholding food <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hitting, slapping, punching, kicking, hair-pulling, biting, pushing, scalding/ burning
Signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No explanation for injuries (bruises, cuts, etc) or inconsistency with what was said to have happened • Frequent injuries or unexplained falls • Subdued or changed behaviour in the presence of a particular person • Signs of malnutrition

Sexual abuse or harassment	
Types	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inappropriate touch anywhere • Inappropriate looking, sexual teasing or innuendo or sexual harassment • Indecent exposure
Signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear of receiving help with personal care • Reluctance to be alone with a particular person
Psychological or emotional	
Types	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforced social isolation e.g., preventing someone accessing services, social opportunities or seeing friends • Removing mobility or communication aids or intentionally leaving someone unattended when they need assistance • Preventing someone from meeting their religious and cultural needs • Preventing the expression of choice and opinion • Failure to respect privacy • Bullying, harassment, humiliation, swearing or verbal abuse • Addressing a person in a patronising way • Cyber bullying
Signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A change of appetite, weight loss/gain • Signs of distress: tearfulness, anger <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apparent false claims, by someone involved with the person, to attract unnecessary treatment • An air of silence when a particular person is present • Withdrawal or change in the psychological state of the person • Low self-esteem • Uncooperative and aggressive behaviour
Financial, material, or criminal exploitation	
Types	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theft of money or possessions • Fraud, scamming • Preventing a person from accessing their own money or benefits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undue pressure, duress, threat, or undue influence put on the person in connection with financial transactions • False representation, using another person's bank account, cards, or documents
Signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Missing personal possessions • Unexplained lack of money or inability to maintain lifestyle • Unexplained withdrawal of funds from accounts

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The person allocated to manage financial affairs is evasive or uncooperative • A lack of clear financial accounts held by a guild, county, country, or region • Failure to provide receipts for financial transactions carried out on behalf of the Trefoil Guild
Neglect or self-neglect	
Types	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing care in a way that the person dislikes • Not taking account of individuals' cultural, religious, or ethnic needs • Ignoring or isolating the person • Preventing the person from making their own decisions • Failure to ensure privacy and dignity • Lack of self-care to an extent that it threatens personal health and safety • Neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health, or surroundings
Signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very poor personal hygiene and or unkempt appearance • Lack of essential food or neglecting household maintenance • Inability or unwillingness to take medication or treat illness or injury

Taken from: www.scie.org.uk/safeguarding/adults/introduction/types-and-indicators-of-abuse

© The Trefoil Guild
 17-19 Buckingham Palace Road London
 SW1W 0PT

Author: Chair F&GP
 Version: 3.1
 Date: April 2024
 Reviewed: March 2026
 Review date: March 2027